

"CHOOSE YOUR COFFIN."

By Prof. C. H. Robertson, Shanghai.

"About every thirty-nine seconds some one in China dies from tuberculosis. And tuberculosis is preventable—if the people only know how. China numbers her plague cases by the thousand. The plague is also preventable—if the people know how. During a recent winter for eight weeks Nanking suffered with an epidemic of smallpox. One week the deaths numbered two hundred and fifty. Yet smallpox is preventable—if the people know how. Step up, gentlemen. What will you have—tuberculosis, the plague or smallpox? Choose your coffin."

In this vivid, startling fashion, Dr. W. W. Peter, of the Health Division of the National Lecture Department of the Chinese Associations, addressed thousands throughout the republic. Quietly and gravely he waited, pointing to the small coffins at his elbow, but as no one accepted his invitation the usher was requested to "take a coffin out and bury it."

Dr. J. R. Mott had in 1896 designated the million literary men of China as the Gibraltar of the non-Christian world, but not until six years later was it possible to send the writer to them to test out science as a means for breaking into that nation's official class with the religion of Jesus Christ. So formidable were the difficulties, so enormous the field, and so few the workers that ten years were given to foundation laying, to dividing and testing of methods before the first great experiment was tried.

"Can science be used as an entering wedge to secure \$45,000 for an Association building site in Foochow?" we asked. Now Foochow is a "peculiar" city. The president of the Chamber of Commerce said: "There is a famine outside the city; this is no time for financial solicitation."

And the head of Foochow's greatest bank added, "This is a time of financial depression."

"We are likely to be invaded," de-

clared the head of a patriotic society. "People are getting up at 4 o'clock in the morning to drill. You cannot get their attention."

"What, get the rulers of these twenty millions of people to come clear across the city for a lecture on science? Unthinkable!" cried the American consul-general.

Even a prominent missionary did not have "the faith that such a thing could be done."

Those who are within the secret know that these are the things that drive men to prayer. So under the leadership of God we rode in our sedan chairs up to the gate of the Tartar general's palace, carrying with us a suitcase laboratory of scientific inventions. These gripped his attention instantly.

"Certainly this will interest the officials," said he. "I will be glad to co-operate in organizing a party."

A week later all of the officials of importance marched miles across the city up to the Association building, each official chair with its large number of bearers and its accompanying bodyguard of soldiers. As a result, the provincial treasurer pledged the group for \$5,000, and a few days later a leading business man pledged \$10,000 in memory of his father. Then came two other pledges of \$5,000 each, and at the end of the month—victory!

Soon afterwards I was with Sherwood Eddy, in Taiyuanfu, capital of Shansi Province, to try the experiment of using science as an introduction to evangelistic meetings. The university president said, "The governor is ill, and as other important officials have recently come and have not yet seen the governor, they can neither receive nor pay calls. But the governor's physician, a man of faith, declared, 'He is not really sick, but nervous and worried over his many problems.' He secured for us our audience, thinking that a science lecture would be a helpful prescription. So profoundly impressed was he by the demonstration of the gyroscope and its applications that he arranged for the other officials to enjoy the same thing the following day at the Education Museum. Then followed a busy week of student audiences, the hall being filled to its capacity two or three times a day, and then Eddy with his inimitable message of evangelism bringing wonderful fruitage.

Eighteen months later, in Wuchang, General Li Yun Hung arranged for the first lecture to be given in his own palace, inviting his official friends as guests. A few weeks later he started the revolution, helping to sweep the centuries-old dynasty off the throne and to establish the republic. He was elected vice-president, and now, because of the death of Yuan Shih Kan, has become the president of China. General Li has extended many profound courtesies since that lecture in his palace.

In 1914, throughout the ten weeks of that intensely interesting and fruitful science and religion campaign through twelve cities for the kingdom of God, the prayers of faithful friends and the co-operation of men of high positions were constantly in evidence. In Wuchang, for instance, the military governor set aside for us the Martyr's Memorial Temple, erected a special auditorium seating two thousand people, installing electric lights and providing tea for the guests. In all, an average of ten thousand people per week for those ten weeks was the record of each of the lectures on science and religion. And in a province-wide campaign, started at Foochow, nine thousand men signed up for the investigation of the Christian life, and for entering Bible classes as rapidly as they found our story to be true.

Thus were answered two great questions of twelve years of sacrificial effort: "Can the literary men of China be reached, and can science be connected with evangelism?" Then came the third question which others have since helped to answer: "Can these scientific and objective methods be applied to other subjects and by other men?"

Dr. W. W. Peter first asked that these methods should be applied to preventative medicine in China, and was enlisted at once for this great work. In his first great campaign at Changsha, in six days more than thirty thousand people heard the lectures on "Health and Preventative Medicine." In one of these great meetings sat a member of the Famine Relief Committee who proposed that the method should be applied to the preventative side of the famine problem. With the \$3,000 appropriated, D. Y. Lin, master of forestry, a graduate of Amherst and Yale, began training and equipping a division of conservation. Now governors take him as their guest as they tour their provinces, usually having the message of conservation and forestry presented before all of the officials in the important places.

Then D. Z. T. Yui, of St. John's University, an experienced educator and ex-editor and Chinese official, caught the vision of the application of the same methods to China's educational problem. Months of preparation followed in the lecture department laboratory at Shanghai, elaborate equipment being provided by means of which he might vividly and graphically present the catastrophe China faces unless she solves her problem of education. A magistrate presiding at one of Mr. Yui's lectures cried, "Our hearts were broken by the first revolution; they were battered by the second, and now we have not another one to break. Don't show the people that fearful situation." The operation was surgical in severity, but in the very next city the provincial governors appropriated \$15,000 for the duplication of Mr. Yui's apparatus about education, and forty government lecturers have been sent to him to be trained to go out into every city and village of importance in the entire province. Others now wish to do likewise.

Yes, we can get at the leaders of China—president, vice-president, governors of provinces, presidents of hundreds of universities and colleges, tens of thousands of students and people by the hundred thousand through these great campaigns of science and religion. They can be brought to spiritual decisions for the Christian life in great numbers, and others can be equipped and trained to use these methods.—Association Men.

THE NEED OF WORKERS IN MEXICO.

"If there ever was a time when the truths of Christianity needed to be set before the Mexican people it is now," writes a Presbyterian missionary to Mexico.

"So by precept and example we expect to keep on in the work until circumstances force us to leave, and I am hoping that hour will not come.

"Send us reinforcements. There is no use to wait for calm in Mexico. There are certainly a half dozen valiant souls who would be glad to carry the 'faith of our fathers' into Mexico.

"High prices, low wages and depreciated currency make untold suffering even today, and there is little hope in sight. But adversity makes the heart tender and easy of access. The Presbyterian Church is not yet doing anything like its share of the work to be done in Mexico.

"If you call for recruits for Mexico

they'll come as they came for China, as they always have come when the call was made with no uncertain sound."

The word discouragement is not to be found in the dictionary of the kingdom of heaven.—Melinda Rankin.

Marriages

Coffman-Simmons: April 25, 1916, at the manse, Churchville, Va., by the pastor, Rev. William C. White, Mr. Harry C. Coffman, of Melrose Avenue, Roanoke, Va., and Miss Hazel L. Simmons, of Augusta County, Va.

Hahn-Weld: May, 1916, at the manse, Churchville, Va., by the Rev. William C. White, Mr. Arthur E. Hahn and Miss Hazel A. Weld, both of Augusta County, Va., near Staunton, Va.

Wilson-Carper: On June 6, 1916, in the Presbyterian church, Loch Willow, Churchville, Va., Mr. Jed Wilson, of Clifton Forge, Va., and Miss Gertrude Carper, by the Rev. William C. White, pastor.

Bear-Harvey: June 22, 1916, at the home of the bride's parents, Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Harvey, near Buffalo Gap, Christian, Va., by the Rev. William C. White, pastor, Mr. William T. Bear, of Churchville, Va., and Miss Blanche Harvey.

Thompson-Lightner: August 8, 1916, at the home of the bride's mother, Mrs. M. V. Lightner, near Swoope, Va., by the Rev. William C. White, pastor, Mr. William W. Thompson, of Aspermont, Texas, and Miss Mary V. Lightner.

Perdue-Wingfield: In Appomattox County, Virginia, August 9, 1916, by the Rev. J. M. W. Elder, Mr. Elvert Vernie Perdue and Miss Mary Elsie Wingfield.

Deaths

Blanton: Died at the home of her daughter, Mrs. S. F. Badgett, in Farmville, Va., on August 12th, Mrs. Sarah J. Blanton, wife of the late Dr. James M. Blanton, of Cumberland County, in her ninety-first year.

MARTHA PHARR EVANS.

Was born in Campbell County, Va., September 9, 1844, and quietly passed away February 2, 1916, leaving two brothers and one sister, the last of a large family, and a wide circle of relatives and friends to cherish her memory.

In 1860, while a girl in her teens, she made profession of her faith in Christ and united with New Concord church, of which she remained a constant and devoted member as long as she lived on earth.

A woman of quiet but bright and sunny disposition, she always impressed those who knew her best with her happy, cheerful spirit and unselfish thoughtfulness of others.

She loved the church of her choice, rendered her Master an active, joyous service, and was always true to the cause of Christ and loyal to her pastor.

She was always a welcome addition to any group or gathering, and contributed to the enjoyment of everyone present by her sunshiny face, her cheerful words and happy manner.

Above all was the outflow of the joy that comes from a heart filled with her Saviour's love, and the end was peace. Pastor.

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